

1st November 1932] [Sir Archibald Campbell]

“ Then, Sir, as regards the second part of the resolution relating to the use of honorific prefix ‘ Brahmasri,’ it is rather difficult for the Government to go further than they have already done. If we accept this resolution, we may have similar requests from a large number of other sects. At present, we have laid down how Europeans, Hindus and Muhammadans are to be addressed and there are three principal methods of addressing persons of these communities.

“ And as regards the Hindus, it is usual unless the addressee is entitled to a higher title such as ‘ Raja ’ or ‘ Sir ’ to use the prefix ‘ Maharajaraja Sri ’ which, I believe is regarded as an honourable prefix. So, Sir, I am afraid I cannot accept the whole of the resolution as it stands. But I trust I have made it clear that a large part of the hon. Mover’s speech was based upon a misapprehension. If, in any case, the Orders of 1921 are not carried out, I shall be very glad if the hon. Member would draw my attention to it or will inform the district officials concerned who will enquire into the matter and see that the Order is carried out.” 12-15
p.m.

* Mr. YAKUB HASAN:—“ Mr. President, Sir, the hon. Sir Archibald Campbell stated that the first part of the resolution has been complied with by the Government, but I do not think it has been fully complied with. He said that when any person addresses Government, they would adopt in their reply the spelling adopted by that person. But that is not what is wanted. They must adopt one uniform spelling for the community. I do not see what is the difficulty for the Government to accept it, and in every case to use the word ‘ Achari ’ irrespective of the fact whether the person who addresses them uses the word ‘ Achari ’ or ‘ Asari.’ If the Government have occasion to address a man from whom they received no communication, what will be the title they will adopt? Will they put a question to him as to whether he wants to be addressed as ‘ Achari ’ or ‘ Asari ’ and address him accordingly? It is I think not at all good form to use two words for the same community, sometimes calling the persons ‘ Achari ’ and sometimes ‘ Asari.’ As for the suffixes, I think the Government can accept them. I do not see any difficulty whatever why the Government should not accept this resolution in full.”

The resolution was then put and carried.

(3) APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO ENQUIRE INTO THE ALLEGED ATROCITIES COMMITTED ON THE DEPRESSED CLASSES OF THE RAMNAD DISTRICT.

* Rao Sahib V. I. MUNISWAMI PILLAI:—“ Mr. President, Sir, under Standing Order No. 55 (3) I request permission to move the resolution standing in the name of Swami A. S. Sahajanandam.”

The permission was granted by the House.

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Rao Sahib V. I. MUNISWAMI PILLAI:—" Mr. President, Sir, I beg to move that

' this Council recommends to the Government to appoint a committee of both officials and non-officials, not exceeding five in number, to enquire into and report on the alleged atrocities committed by the Nattars of Devakottai subdivision of the Ramnad district on the Depressed Classes in June and July 1932.'

" Sir, the matter of the atrocities committed on the depressed classes in Devakottai has been before this Council during the last 18 months. It was in August 1931 that a similar resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority by this Council, to appoint a committee to thoroughly investigate into the various disabilities caused to the depressed classes in Ramnad district. Unfortunately the Government did not take sufficient steps to mitigate the grievances, or appoint a committee to thoroughly go into the matter. The trouble again occurred in the month of June 1932 and also in the month of July 1932. I was about to move an adjournment motion in the last Council but the hon. the Home Member dissuaded me and promised that he would take all the necessary steps to mitigate the sufferings of these people. Consequently he was kind enough to convene a small conference including a few members of the depressed classes of this Council, the Labour Commissioner, the Inspector-General of Police and the Chief Secretary, when it was possible for us to exchange views in regard to the matters in Devakottai. At that time the hon. the Home Member agreed that myself and Mr. Daniel Thomas might visit the affected areas and inform the Government of specific instances of atrocities committed on the depressed classes. With due deference to their wishes, myself, Mr. Daniel Thomas and Mr. Devadasan went round the Devakottai division, made several enquiries and submitted a big report consisting of nearly 40 pages. Unfortunately the Government had not the courtesy even to acknowledge the receipt of the report brought out by us at a great expense and at much personal inconvenience. Sir, to-day I have seen a very long letter from the President of the Ramnad District Adi-Dravida Association wherein he clearly says that the matter is still worse and has not improved even after the visit of the Labour Commissioner. Sir, the atrocities and the dacoities actually took place on the 5th July 1932 and I understood the Labour Commissioner visited the spot only in the month of September. From that you can understand how much he will be able to gather of the real happenings.

" Sir, the necessity for a committee is this. At present the Labour Department is manned by one of the senior members of the Board of Revenue and I think he has not enough time and leisure to do justice to the work of the Labour Department. In a letter, the

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President of the Ramnad District Adi-Dravida Association has written to me he says:

'I regret to inform you that matters are growing serious in these parts and the Kallars are still going on terrorizing and collecting fines and also robbing the cattle of the people who do not pay the fines inflicted. The complaints of the depressed classes are not in many cases entertained, and even if entertained everything ends in smoke. . . . Therefore kindly take the necessary pains to see most of the sympathetic members of other communities and also our representatives and see that the motion of Swami Sahajanandam is passed and a committee of un-official members is appointed to investigate the whole affair. I know the Government have no regard either for the interests of the depressed classes or for their representatives. If a thing of this kind had happened to any other community, by this time the whole Government should have to do their duty.

'And further he goes on to say:

'The Joint Magistrate called the depressed classes and warned them to obey the communal orders of the Kallars. The depressed classes refused to obey the orders of the Kallars. Since then the Kallars began to seriously terrorize the depressed classes and the lives of their leaders were threatened openly, and they also openly declared that they would loot their villages by the end of June 1932.'

'So, Sir, I think the time has come when a committee as suggested in the resolution is essential. The Government officials go there and they have to confer with the district authorities. Within the short space of time given to them it is not possible for them to find out the real state of affairs. Myself, my hon. Friend, Mr. Daniel Thomas and my hon. Friend, Mr. Devadasan were there. We went to village after village and we consulted non-depressed gentlemen at Sivaganga and also at Ramnad, and found that the position of the depressed classes was so very serious that it is high time for the Government to do something. I know many people have left their villages and are wandering in the districts practically begging. I went to a village known as Amavaravatipatti where there were a few refugees. When we asked the real state of affairs, they would not come out, fearing that they would be further terrorized by the Kallars. After a lot of persuasion they came and gave us the real state of affairs: There are people owning lands in that particular division; they could not cultivate their lands on account of the oppression of the Nattars. I do not know how the Government are going to collect their annual kists. As it is a matter that has been before the Council for a very long time I earnestly appeal to the hon. the Home Member to accept the resolution and proceed to appoint a committee to thoroughly investigate into the matter. Otherwise I am afraid the Kallars will wipe off the Adi-Dravidas from that Devakottai division. In these circumstances, I commend this resolution for the acceptance of this House.'

Mr. H. M. JAGANNATHAM:—"I second it."

* Mr. M. DEVADASAN:—"Mr. President, Sir, in supporting this resolution I want to make a few observations. This is not the first time that the treatment of the depressed classes of Ramnad district has come to the notice of this Council. Time after time interpellations have been

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put on the subject. At the beginning of last year, i.e., in January 1931, a similar resolution was discussed in this Council. It was accepted unanimously by the whole House but the situation in Ramnad has not improved in the least. People sent in memorials. Not only representations were made to the Members of this Council but also petitions were addressed to His Excellency the Governor, and to His Excellency the Viceroy.'

12-30
p.m.

" But it has to be stated there has been no redress made in the direction till now. On the 20th August myself, Mr. Daniel Thomas and Mr. Muniswami Pillai all went there to see whether the allegations made by the people were true and had any basis, because the Government officers suspected and doubted the truth of the allegations. So we went personally to investigate them and stopped there for two days and went from place to place and recorded the statements made by the people to us. We came to the conclusion that the report made here fell short of the true state of affairs existing there. On the 5th and 6th July there was a regular and organized looting in Devakottai. It may be said that the report made by the depressed classes is not genuine or that some interested people have set them up to send memorials. That can't be the case. If nothing had taken place there was no necessity for these people to complain. They have been suffering untold tyranny at the hands of the Kallars of Ramnad. Villages had been deserted and the people had to seek refuge in other places. Even when the people desert the villages and live elsewhere they are not safe in the new places. The Kallars who made the people desert their villages pursue them to places of refuge along with the Kallars of the new locality and make them leave the village on pain of further punishment. The statements of the depressed classes were also corroborated by Maravas, who are kindred class of the Kallars. It has been conceded that there are real grievances and they must be redressed without any delay.

" From the enquiry we made we found there was arson in the villages of Unjanai, Eluppukudi, Aramanai, Sinnavayal and Pavanakottai. When we passed Pavanakottai we found one school which had been recently destroyed by fire. There had been daylight looting in several places. We recorded statements from several villagers. They made us understand that there was daylight looting in the villages of Unjanai, Simmathoor, Meenavayal, Eluppakudi, Kallivayal, Eluvankottai, Thonnirvayal, Mola Kavananayal, Thimmananayal, Paramakudi, Pahadi, Vijayapuram, Kallangudi, Edayankulam, Moyannagal, Vollivayal, Pirandivayal, Kottavayal, Nachankulam, Chithoor, Ponnathur, Chinthani and Arianakottai. Not only was there daylight looting but also there were murders, assaults and rapes in several villages. I am not going to narrate all these villages where all these atrocities were perpetrated by the Kallars. Apart from that the depressed class members who were not willing

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to obey caste rules were asked to pay fines. If they had not enough money to pay their Nattars, then and there they were forced to execute promissory notes so that they might recover the money from them later on. The reason for all these atrocities was due to the negligence and lack of sense of duty of the officials of the locality. I understand the Police and Magistrates pose as peace-makers and ask the people to abide by the time-honoured caste rules and restrictions. Just now we passed a resolution of Mr. Ganala Ramamurti calling his people as Acharyas, etc. We all concede that people have learnt self-respect; and they want to educate and elevate themselves. They cannot be put up with such degrading conditions which caste imposed upon them in the past. The officials being caste men being imbued with caste ideas they ask the depressed classes to abide by the caste rules. That is they should not have upper clothes; nor should they possess vessels of high value in their houses, etc. We examined some women at Amaravathiputhur. They said that they could not wear ordinary thalis. On the other hand they were forced to wear only wooden thalis by the Kallars. So these humiliations nobody can brook with any dignity. So there has been a revolt as the people have been disgusted with these conditions and the rules and regulations of the Kallars. The officials do not want to help the depressed classes. They are on the side of the Nattars. It appears that they asked the depressed classes to abide by the decisions. These cannot be tolerated any longer. It may be said that the depressed classes being servants, must abide by these humiliations, but the fact is otherwise. The depressed classes of the Ramnad district are more economically independent than the brethren of the other districts. The Kallars inflict ill-treatment upon the depressed classes for no justification whatsoever.

“The hon. the Home Member might advance an argument in support of his position that no enquiry committee should be appointed because it is a matter between two sections of the depressed classes that the Government have taken steps to reclaim the Kallars as belonging to depressed classes. But I have to submit that they do not belong to the depressed classes at all. They occupy the position of overlords and the depressed classes are subjected to their tyranny. The hon. Home Member might say that the solution of the problem is in a compromise. If it had been possible there would have been a compromise long ago. No compromise has ever taken place between the two classes. There must have been willingness and intention on the part of both to enter into a compromise. If we speak of it in the Legislative Council, it must be acceptable to all parties to be operative and useful.

“Mr. Muniswami Pillai has described the recent happenings in the Ramnad district and I do not want to take up much of the time of the

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Council by reiterating them. Thus it will be seen there has been sufficient necessity for an independent enquiry to go into the grievances of the depressed classes. I hope the Government would accept the request. We want sufficient protection for the poor classes to live in the same district. It is not in a spirit of retaliation or revenge but in a spirit of supplication for help that this resolution has been brought into this House. So I appeal to the members of the House to accept the resolution. I do not want to be a member of the committee. We three members have made enquiries and submitted our report. We request that some other members both officials and non-officials should make an investigation into the affairs and see that the claims of the depressed classes are no longer treated with scant courtesy and neglect. With these few words I support the motion."

* Rao Bahadur R. SRINIVASAN:—"Sir, from what I heard from the two previous speakers and from what I saw from the various petitions and telegrams received by me, I am convinced that there is sufficient reason to believe that the subordinate police officers and the subordinate civil servants are in league with the Nattars in oppressing the depressed classes. The result is there. As has been said by the last speaker a committee of officials and non-officials will, I believe, be able to find out the real truth and something may be done to rectify the mistakes."

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MAHOMED USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—"Mr. President, Sir, I do not think any committee is necessary at this stage because at present there is no trouble. After the 7th July things have been restored to normal condition. The committee will be only reviving old memories and will bring about bitterness. As the House is aware, when this question came up last time I said that I would ask the Labour Commissioner to tour in the area and report and also convene a conference. There was a conference in my room when the Chief Secretary to Government, the Labour Commissioner, myself and some members of the depressed classes were present. They told us all that they have heard in the matter. Further three hon. Members of this Council Messrs. Muniswami Pillai, Daniel Thomas and Devadasan went to the spot and their report was also sent to the Labour Commissioner. The Labour Commissioner has sent in his report after visiting the area. Therefore there is no necessity for a committee because we have both the non-official and official views. There is no point in appointing a committee."

12-45
p.m.

"The Labour Commissioner has recently toured in the parts of Ramnad affected by the Nattar-Adi-Dravida disputes in company with the District Magistrate and the District Superintendent of Police, and I may with your permission, Sir, read the following information based upon the reports submitted to the Government by these officers:

'The origin of the Nattar-Adi-Dravida trouble in Ramnad is to be sought in the desire of the depressed classes of that region to raise in the social scale. Customs are, in fact, changing for which the reason may be that many of the

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depressed classes have been to places such as Ceylon and Burma where the caste restrictions of their native villages do not exist to the same extent. On their return to their villages they wish those restrictions to be removed. But there is the danger that any sudden removal of restrictions may be regarded as an infringement of long-established religious customs.

'The antagonism arising from this movement has of late crystallized over the question of the wearing of shirts by Adi-Dravida men and the wearing of bodices and jewels by their women. The Nattars, while no longer objecting to the practice on all ordinary occasions, demand that the Adi-Dravida men at least should keep the upper part of their bodies uncovered for all ceremonial functions. This practice in the case of women seems to have gone out of use already. The Adi-Dravidas, on the other hand, in their eagerness to assert their position, have on certain occasions appeared at festivals wearing shirts. The Nattars consider their long-established custom not to wear shirts at religious ceremonies is reasonable, as they themselves remove their shirts on such occasions.

'This being the position as between the two communities, their differences were aggravated by the action of agitators. Security proceedings were taken in 1931 to prevent a breach of the peace, but the proceedings ultimately failed.

'The immediate cause of the trouble in 1932, was the arrival of a party of American Missionaries with their staff in July 1932. They began an evangelical tour in the course of which, it is reported, they urged the Adi-Dravidas not to submit to the customs enforced by the Nattars. This resulted in the outbreak at Eluvankottai on the night of the 4th July and the following morning, whether, as the Nattars say, it was the Adi-Dravidas who were emboldened by the presence of the Missionaries to start the trouble by throwing stones at the Nattar quarter, or whether, as the Adi-Dravidas say, it was the Nattars who made the first attack on the Adi-Dravidas out of anger at the Missionaries' presence and preaching.

'The trouble that followed has been exaggerated. Wild rumours circulated rapidly and something of panic ensued among the inhabitants of the Adi-Dravida quarters in several villages, but, with the exception of the village of Eluvankottai, very little actually happened anywhere. Even in the village named very little damage was actually done. The Labour Commissioner at the time of his inspection found that, although the Adi-Dravida quarter of Eluvankottai was still abandoned, all the damage that had been done was confined to some cooking pots and bins for storing grain. None of the articles inside the house had been touched and no looting had taken place. Several of the houses were locked up and the locks had been in no way tampered with. The inhabitants of Thennirvayal, another village that had been abandoned, had already returned, having been brought back by the Nattars themselves in two motor buses engaged for the purpose.

'The present position is as follows. Sixteen Nattars have been charged by the police in connexion with the disturbance at Eluvankottai. The District Magistrate has effected a compromise between the two parties whereby the Nattars agree not to insist upon any of the previous customs except the non-wearing of shirts at religious, marriage and funeral functions. The Labour Commissioner has held a conference at Kandadevi at which a large and representative gathering discussed the whole course of the trouble and endorsed the District Magistrate's compromise as being an eminently fair one. The parties to the compromise are agreed that it should be carried out and its terms enforced impartially by the authorities. The question of opening schools for the depressed classes in such places as really need them has been taken up by the Labour Commissioner in consultation with the District Magistrate. Though the bitterness between the parties is not yet entirely assuaged, the Labour Commissioner and the local authorities are agreed that there is no necessity to post additional police to the area. The situation is entirely quiet everywhere and there has been no disturbance since 7th July. The District Superintendent of Police and the police force of the district are alive to the necessity for prompt action at the first sign of a recrudescence of the trouble. The following is the gist of the instructions issued by the District Superintendent of Police.

'The most important work of the local police force is the control of the Nattar-Adi-Dravida disputes. Close touch must be kept with every development and the situation handled with firmness and impartiality. Regular beats must

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be served to the affected villages and full details of all information must be reported by the beatmen and by the station house officer and his assistants who must also pay frequent visits to these villages. A proper record must be kept of all incidents connected with the trouble. All cases registered must be fully and promptly investigated. Persons who report false cases must be prosecuted. Security proceedings must be undertaken if the situation requires. Superior officers must be kept constantly and fully informed.'

" Thus, it will be clear that the Police are now keeping watch over the situation. If any trouble recurs, I am sure the offenders will be brought to book. I do not think, in the circumstances, that any committee is necessary at the present moment to reinvestigate the whole matter, especially as after the 7th July nothing has happened. The three hon. Members of this House who went to those places and studied the situation have made their report to the Government, and on that report the District Magistrate, the Labour Commissioner and the District Superintendent of Police have made their own observations and sent in their reports to the Government. An agreement has practically been reached between the Nattars and the Adi-Dravidas, and there has been peace since. What we want is only peace, and it has been secured, and there is no point in raking up the question again.

" Now, coming to the recommendations of the three hon. Members of this House, who made a report after investigating the matter, they are the following:

(a) Starting of security cases against the Nattars in some of the villages where the lootings were committed.

(b) A more vigorous conduct of the prosecutions relating to offences against the Adi-Dravidas by the Nattars which are now pending in courts. At present they seem to be dealt with in the most negligent, non-chalant manner possible.

(c) The posting of punitive Police in some of the affected villages.

(d) The transfer of the present Subdivisional Magistrate of Devakottah and the Circle Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Police at Devakottah, and posting in their places strong and sympathetic officers who should make it clear to the Nattars that they would not tolerate the taking of law into their own hands by the Nattars.

(e) The keeping of a watchful and observant eye by the District Magistrate, the District Superintendent of Police, and Deputy Superintendent of Police on those affected areas and on the way in which the local officials deal with the Nattars and Adi-Dravidas.

(f) The opening of some labour schools in Devakottah division and the encouragement by or through the Labour Commissioner, of the refugee Adi-Dravidas to return to their homes and villages.'

" As regards these, the Labour Commissioner says:

' As for the requests made by the M.L.Cs. in their letter, dated 27th August 1932, (a) and (b) are matters for the local Magistracy and Police. I have already stated that I consider that no delay should take place in dealing with any case which may arise. This, I think, is essential. As regards (c), the posting of punitive Police, such a course seems to be entirely unnecessary. As regards (d) (viz., transfer of officers) I have no recommendation to make. This is a matter on which the District Magistrate can report better than I can. I think that the advent of Mr. Gadsden and the thoroughness with which he has enquired into the local troubles will ease the situation very considerably. I have already commented on (f) regarding the opening of schools.'

" Now, Sir, I would make this appeal to the House. As I have already said, the whole matter has been closed and somehow or other, things are automatically settling themselves properly. Three hon. Members of

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this House went to the spot, studied the situation and submitted a report to the Government, and practically most of their recommendations have been accepted. So there is no point in posting the punitive Police in the area because there is no trouble there, and definite instructions have been issued to the Police to deal with the situation impartially. If any trouble arises, I shall see to it that the offenders are properly dealt with. As I said before, an agreement has been reached and both the parties have agreed to abide by the conditions of that agreement; I do not think there is any point in reopening the case by appointing a committee now. I would therefore appeal to the hon. Member to withdraw his resolution."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI:—" Mr. President, the speeches of the hon. Members who spoke in support of this resolution reveal a very astonishing state of affairs, and indeed my astonishment would have been all the greater had I not myself been acquainted with the petitions made by the Adi-Dravida residents of this district about an year ago. In answer to a very strong case that was made out on the floor of this House, the hon. the Home Member, in his usual tactful manner, managed to see that the resolution was torpedoed by promising to institute an enquiry or hold a conference. As is generally the case with us, we, innocent Members of the Legislative Council, fell into his trap. The result was that there had been a conference no doubt at which the Inspector-General of Police, the Labour Commissioner and three hon. Members representing the depressed classes were present. After that conference, Messrs. Thomas and Muniswami Pillai were asked to tour in those parts of the district where there was trouble and to collect information. Of course, even without the permission of the hon. the Home Member, I suppose those hon. Members have the liberty to tour in those places and find out the facts for themselves. All the same, they went and collected information and submitted a report to the hon. the Home Member. What was the reply given to that report? The hon. the Home Member did not consider it necessary to give a reply to those hon. gentlemen who have taken the trouble of going into the district and finding facts for themselves . . ."

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MAHOMED USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—" May I offer a personal explanation, Sir? I think I informed one of the signatories that I had seen the report and that it had been forwarded to the Labour Commissioner for investigation."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI:—" In fact, Sir, one of the hon. Members who sent up that report did complain in a speech that they were denied even the courtesy of a reply in acknowledgment of that report. Whatever that may be, I am glad that the hon. the Home Member sent up the memorandum to the officers concerned. Then, the Labour Commissioner sent up a report. What does that report reveal? The report practically confirms the charges made against the Nattar community in that district. As a matter of fact, it goes further than the allegations made by the hon. Members of this Council and traces

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the community given in resolutions passed at various Conferences convened for the same.

“ Now, Sir, with your permission, I read the following extracts which speak for themselves as to how long the members of my community have been constitutionally agitating for the demand embodied in this motion and since how long the bureaucratic officers have been pursuing inequitable methods neglecting to comply with this simple request and thus creating discontent among the members of my community.

“ The following appears in the Census of India, 1871, Vol. I, Madras Presidency Report, at page 151:—

‘ In the south all the members of the Kammalar or artisan castes wear the sacred thread and many of them call themselves “ Viswa Brahmans ” . . . and some of them style themselves “ Achari ” or “ religious teacher ” (Sakaladhikari).’

“ In the Census of India, 1881, Berar Report, at pages 166 and 167, the following is found:—

‘ In the Mackenzie Mss. however there is an account of the marriage of a Sonar youth to the daughter of a Brahman poet in the Tailanga country. . . . The Sonars have religious teachers of their own caste, the Acharis of the Peninsula and the Sonar Brahmans of the Deccan, and they are said to have claimed and vindicated their right against the Brahmans to perform their own marriage ceremonies.’

“ In the Census of India, 1891, Volume XIII, Madras, Part 1, Report, at page 280, it is stated as follows:—

‘ Kammalan.—Inscriptions show that as late as the year 1030 A.D. the Kammalars were treated as a very inferior caste for they, like the Pariayans, Pallans, etc., were confined to a particular part or cheri of the village site (vide South Indian Inscriptions) . . . Their usual title is Achari and some call themselves Pattan (Pandit) which is an equivalent of the Brahman Bhatta.’

“ In the Census of India, 1901, Volume VIII, Berar, Part 1, Report, at page 175, I find:—

‘ The case of Lohars or blacksmiths is somewhat different, though for them also a claim has been put forward to rank with Brahmans. Some of them call themselves Twasta Brahmans but nobody else appears to recognize their position as superior to Kumbis. So I place them below the latter.’

“ In the Census of India, 1901, Volume XV, Madras, Part I, Report, at page 158, the following may be noticed:—

‘ They usually call themselves Viswa Brahmans.’

“ The Census of India, 1901, Volume XXV, Rajputana, Part 1, Report, has the following at page 163:—

‘ Sunar.—Most of them claim to be twice-born and some wear the sacred thread but their claim is not generally recognized and they have been classed among the high order of Sudras. Their origin is obscure and they appear to be of mixed descent.’

“ In the Census of India, 1901, Volume XXVI, Travancore, Part 1, Report, the following appears at page 274:—

‘ At Trikkariyar in Muvattapuzha taluk where it is said Parasurama was last seen by mortal eye, the writer was interested to see Kammalars having the identical dress and jewellery of Tamil Brahmans of the Smarta persuasion.’

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I know what other property these poor people had? You demolish their kitchen and deprive them of their cottages and say 'Well, nothing has been lost.' Well, Sir, this kind of appeal on behalf of the depressed classes who want to assert their elementary rights, the fundamental rights as citizens, ought to receive more encouragement and support from the Government. It seems there has been a woeful betrayal of the cause of the weak and the poor as against the rich and powerful. The Nattar community is a very rich and influential community. Therefore Government cannot move their hand against them. That kind of attitude ought to be put an end to. For very much smaller offences you threaten people with stationing punitive police. If there is any case deserving of the stationing of punitive police, it is this, when one community drives out another community from their residence. Can a more serious offence be imagined, Sir, to justify the stationing of punitive police? I want the Government to make the Nattars understand that the Government are not going to desert these depressed classes against their tyrannies but that they are going to stand for the rights of the depressed classes as against the Nattars. I want the Government to tell the local officials to be more firm in their attitude and not yield to the intimidation of any powerful community. But the local officials cannot be expected to be more courageous than the Government. If Government show such timid attitude, what can the local Inspector or Sub-Inspector do? After all, they have got to be guided by the local feeling. The local feeling consists of the Nattar feeling. Surely a small force cannot be expected to do much unless they know that the Government at the centre are likely to give their support. Let that assurance be given by the Government to the local officials, namely, that Government will not tolerate this kind of tyranny, and all will be well."

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MAHOMED USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—
"As regards the assurance required by my hon. Friend, I will say this that the Government will not hesitate to take any extreme step to put down such things—to station the punitive police, if necessary."

* Rao Sahib V. I. MUNISWAMI PILLAI:—"I have to thank the hon. the Home Member for his reading to the House from a big report. Most of the information contained therein was placed before us when we met in a small conference. There was one point touching the interference of the missionaries and consequent trouble. When we were there, we approached most of these missionaries and others connected with the matter, and came to the conclusion that it was not so. It is not the interference of the missionaries at all that brought about this state of things.

"It is said that the Labour Commissioner visited Eluvankottai but found the village deserted, most of the houses locked up and personal things of the depressed classes looted. That shows very clearly that the state of affairs has not improved. I have also mentioned that I have received a letter from Ramnad in which the writer says 'I beseech

222 APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO ENQUIRE INTO THE ALLEGED
ATROCITIES COMMITTED ON THE DEPRESSED CLASSES
OF THE RAMNAD DISTRICT

[Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai] [1st November 1932]

in the name of the poor people to do your best to see the committee appointed.' I think the hon. the Home Member fears that appointing a committee would cost a good deal. The other day, the Finance Committee was told that there is a saving of Rs. 50 lakhs which can be utilized for several purposes. So, in the interests of the depressed classes, I appeal to the hon. the Home Member to accept this resolution and get up a small committee to go through the reports presented by the non-officials and officials and see how far they could strive to bring about a solution of this problem. The hon. the Home Member has read just now a report about the situation in Ramnad. If my hon. Friend were to go to Ramnad to-day he will find that the depressed classes are in a most pitiable condition. I have never seen of such pitiable sights in all my experience of depressed classes telling women were raped, and the men were waylaid and assassinated by Kallars. I do not think that any man could remain unmoved by such sights. I have heard women coming and telling the way they were treated. In all earnestness therefore, through you, Mr. President, I appeal to the House to accept this resolution."

* The hon. Khan Bahadur Sir MAHOMED USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—
"Mr. President, Sir, after the assurance that I have given to my hon. Friend, Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti, I do not think that there is any necessity at all for pressing this motion. I have also read to the House the instructions issued to the police, and the police are on the watch. If again there is trouble there, the Government will not hesitate to take extreme measures to maintain law and order."

Rao Sahib V. I. MUNISWAMI PILLAI:—"I press the motion, Sir."
The resolution was put and declared lost.

A poll was demanded and the House divided thus:—

Ayes.

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|---|--|
| 1. Mrs. K. Alamelumangathayaramma. | 23. Khan Bahadur P. Khalif-ul-lah Sahib Bahadur. |
| 2. Mr. M. Devadasan. | 24. Mr. V. P. Narayanan Nambiyar. |
| 3. Rao Sahib N. Siva Raj. | 25. „ Abdul Hameed Khan. |
| 4. Mr. M. S. Sreshta. | 26. „ K. M. Duraiswami Reddiyar. |
| 5. „ P. C. Moses. | 27. Pattagar of Palayakottai. |
| 6. „ P. V. Rajagopala Pillai. | 28. Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar. |
| 7. „ V. G. Vasudeva Pillai. | 29. „ C. R. Parthasarathi Ayyangar. |
| 8. „ C. Indriah. | 30. Rai Sahib C. Kolanda Reddi. |
| 9. „ P. Bayappa Reddi. | 31. Rao Bahadur C. Natesa Mudaliyar. |
| 10. Rao Sahib V. Dharmalingam Pillai. | 32. Diwan Bahadur S. Ellappa Chettiyar. |
| 11. Mr. J. A. Davis. | 33. Rao Sahib D. Krishnamurti. |
| 12. „ Daniel Thomas. | 34. Mr. G. Sriramulu. |
| 13. „ H. B. Ari Gowder. | 35. „ H. M. Jagannatham. |
| 14. „ S. A. A. Annamalai Chettiyar. | 36. Rao Bahadur R. Srinivasan. |
| 15. „ D. V. Narasimhaswami. | 37. Mr. G. R. Premayya. |
| 16. Pandit Ganala Ramamurti. | 38. S. M. K. Beyabani Sahib Bahadur. |
| 17. Mr. K. Kesava Ramamurti Nayudu. | 39. Mr. C. Krishnan. |
| 18. Sriman M. G. Patnaik Mahasayo. | 40. „ Mahboob Ali Baig. |
| 19. Dr. P. Subbarayan. | 41. Rao Sahib C. Jayaram Nayudu. |
| 20. Mr. Yakub Hasan. | 42. „ V. I. Muniswami Pillai. |
| 21. Rao Bahadur T. A. Ramalingam Chettiyar. | |
| 22. Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti. | |

APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO ENQUIRE INTO THE ALLEGED 223
ATROCITIES COMMITTEE ON THE DEPRESSED CLASSES
OF THE RAMNAD DISTRICT

1st November 1932]

Noes.

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|---|---|
| 1. The hon. Khan-Bahadur Sir Mahomed Usman Sahib Bahadur. | 11. Mr. S. H. Slater. |
| 2. „ Sir Archibald Campbell. | 12. „ T. Sundara Rao Nayudu. |
| 3. „ Mr. H. G. Stokes. | 13. Khan Sahib Syed Taj-ud-din Sahib Bahadur. |
| 4. „ Diwan Bahadur S. Kumaraswami Reddiyar. | 14. Subadar-Major S. A. Nanjappa Bahadur. |
| 5. The hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan. | 15. Mr. B. P. Sesha Reddi. |
| 6. „ Diwan Bahadur B. Muniswami Nayudu. | 16. Raja of Bobbili. |
| 7. Mr. C. E. Jones. | 17. Zamindar of Mirzapuram. |
| 8. „ J. A. Thorne. | 18. Mr. M. A. Muthiah Chettiyar. |
| 9. „ H. M. Hood. | 19. „ A. V. Bhanoji Rao. |
| 10. „ R. Madanagopal Nayudu. | 20. Rao Sahib P. Subrahmanyam Chetti. |
| | 21. Zamindar of Kirlampudi. |
| | 22. Mr. R. Foulkes. |

Ayes 42. Noes 22.

The resolution was carried.

(4) TEMPLE ENTRY FOR DEPRESSED CLASSES.

* Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN:—“ Mr. President, I now rise to move the following resolution: 1-15 p.m.

‘ *This Council recommends to the Government that they may be pleased—*

- (1) *to recognize the strong and growing public feeling in the Hindu community that disabilities hitherto imposed by usage on certain classes of the community in regard to social intercourse and common worship at temples should be removed and justice rendered to them,*
- (2) *to take advantage of the great impetus given in this respect by the settlement arrived at, at Poona among the leaders of the communities and the consequent agitation in the country that places of public worship should be thrown open to the so-called Depressed Classes, and*
- (3) *to bring up legislation setting at rest and removing, if necessary, the doubts and disabilities which trustees and other persons holding authority in the administration of Hindu temples feel in regard to throwing them open to the said classes, with necessary safeguards for the making of regulations for maintaining order and cleanliness in temples and also the performance of ceremonies according to the usage of the temples.’*

“ Mr. President, this resolution is not being brought forward by me as a mere pious wish to admit our depressed brethren into temples. If this resolution is accepted by the House, I mean to go on with legislation in this respect also, if the Government do not seem to do it. Because, Sir, I do feel that the time has come when we must recognize